



The E-Gobrecht

The Electronic Newsletter of the LIBERTY SEATED COLLECTORS CLUB

**Liberty Seated
Collectors Club**

2007 Volume 3, Issue 9

September 2007 (Whole # 30)

LSCC Meets at Milwaukee ANA

Per Len Augsburger, here is the Secretary's summary of the annual LSCC meeting in Milwaukee at the 2007 ANA Convention:

* The Hall of Fame proposal passed. The selection committee for this year will consist of Bill Bugert, Len Augsburger, James Gray and two additional members to be named by the club president. Those interested in being on the committee should apply to John McCloskey. The first Hall of Fame class will be inducted at the Baltimore ANA in 2008.

* The officer election results have not yet been tallied. The only contested office was for Vice President. John McCloskey and Len Augsburger will continue to serve as President and Secretary-Treasurer, respectively. The Vice President result will be available before the end of August.

* Al Blythe, author of *The Complete Guide to Liberty Seated Half Dimes*, passed away on July 31st.

* The Treasurer's report showed the club essentially broke even for the 2006-2007 club year. A dues increase to \$20 was proposed for the following reasons:

a) The club had a one-time income item this year of \$1,000 for back issues related to the Odyssey find and the 1861-O half dollar articles.

b) Postage has now increased from \$1.11 to \$1.31 per issue.

c) The club will incur additional expenses for *Gobrecht Journal* Issue #100 in November due to its additional page count and color cover.

The dues increase was passed.

* A sample 72 page copy of the *Gobrecht Journal* has been produced in anticipation of using a larger page count for the November issue. The current page count is 52 pp. Mike Fey suggested soliciting sponsors and donations for the 100th issue. Depending on the amount of material received for the 100th issue, which appears to be quite substantial, we may publish

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Auction News

By Jim Gray

There were four major auctions in August in which a large number of desirable Seated coins were sold.

The Superior Elite Auction did not feature a single coin of interest.

The Bowers and Merena Sale contained an 1844-O half dime in MS-62 with nice mellow toning and a good strike on the wreath for \$6,900. An 1874-CC dime with VF detail, but whizzed, repaired, and retuned, did not sell in spite of a strong reverse. An 1873-CC arrows quarter in XF-40, which had been cleaned and retuned to a uniform dusky appearance over a good strike, went for \$16,100. An 1873-CC arrows half dollar in MS-62 with a nice, frosty lightly toned look hammered for \$29,900.

The Stacks Sale featured an 1840-O drapery half dime in MS-61 that sold for \$5,750, in spite of suspect toning. An 1846 half dime net VF-35, but much sharper and retuned with pretty toning over an old whizzing, did not sell.

A lightly toned, nice looking 1858-S dime in MS-61 sold for a reasonable \$7,475 while an 1860-O dime that spent some time in the ground, but with XF-45 details, sold for \$2,185. An 1871-CC dime in AU-50 with a good strike and nice toning, but literally covered with small marks, did not sell nor did an example of the same date with VF-35 details, net VF-20, but rough and porous. An absolutely beautiful, AU-55 1873-CC arrows, which was nicely struck with attractive toning, did not make the opening bid of \$18,000. This coin appeared to be very nice and if anybody knows why the opening bid was not met, please let me know. An 1873-CC arrows in VF-20, which was rather ugly with dark and light toning and rough, did not sell. Another example in VG-8 and not bad looking sold for \$2,990. An XF 1874-CC, which was corroded and a little rough with still a decent look, went for \$23,000.

An 1854-O huge O quarter with XF details, but cleaned, did not sell, while a beautiful 1856-S/s in AU-58 with nice toning soared to \$39,100. It appears that two variety collectors locked horns on this coin. An 1870-CC quarter in XF-45 with nice album toning and a few obverse marks was a dream come true for the XF-AU col-

lector and rang the bell for a whopping \$40,250. A duplicate 1870-CC with VF details, but cleaned, rough and with many marks, did not sell.

An 1842-O small date half dollar in XF-45 with peripheral toning, but many marks, sold for \$6,900. An attractive 1844-O double date in AU-55 did not sell, but a very nicely toned XF-45 of the same date realized \$3,650. An 1846 over horizontal 6 half in MS-61 with nice mellow toning sold for \$3,898, but a BU 1855-S with artificial toning did not sell. An 1866-S no motto half in MS-65, ex-Garrett and the finest certified, sold for \$55,200. Lot 697 featured an absolutely superb 1870-CC half dollar in AU-58. This coin had a sharp strike, nice surfaces and edges, and lovely light toning and soared to the amazing price of \$71,875 and was worth every cent. The next lot contained a certified AU-50 1870-CC half dollar that formerly was in my collection. This coin had a decent strike, natural gray toning, and some obverse marks, but unfortunately it looked like a pig's ear compared to the prior lot and did not meet the minimum \$26,500 opening bid. The next lot featured yet another desirable 1870-CC half dollar in XF-45 with very nice toning that hammered for \$21,850. An 1871-CC in XF-40 with hazy toning sold for \$1,955. An 1873-CC arrows in MS-62 with nice color realized \$16,100. An 1874-CC in F-12 sold for \$1,610.

Lots 706 and 707 featured two PCGS certified MS-63 1878-CC half dollars. The first piece had some noticeable marks on Liberty's jaw, legs and left wrist with a very nice reverse. The second piece had similar toning, and was technically a little nicer than the first piece, but had some areas of dark toning on the bottom of the obverse and the reverse had a dark toning streak from the top down through the eagle's neck. Lot 706 sold for \$40,250 and Lot 707 sold for \$25,300 showing that eye appeal can make a large difference in the price of similar grade coins with the more attractive of the two pieces selling for 50% more than the other.

An 1878-S half dollar in VG-8 with some roughness on both sides did not sell with a minimum opening of \$23,500.

An 1850-O dollar in MS-64, tied for the finest known, had nice toning and a dark area at Liberty's left (Auction News continued on page 5)



Question of the Month

By Jim Gray

This forum hopes to increase collector interaction and correspondence. Your participation is welcomed and encouraged. Send your replies and comments to the *E-Gobrecht* Editor at wb8cpy@ar1.net.

Last Month's (August) Question

Are the three circulating Gobrecht Dollars, i.e. the circulation issues of December, 1836, March, 1837 and December, 1839 legitimate parts of the Liberty Seated series?

From **Jason Feldman**: In response to this month's question, I do believe they are part of the Liberty Seated Series. The obverse design is of the series as is the time period.

From **Dennis Garstang**: As a longtime collector of Seated Dollars, I have pondered for years the definition of a "complete set." While I do believe that the 1836 was a general issue coin, I have personally chosen to not include the Gobrecht Dollars in my collection. I also do not include the 1870-S or the ultra rare 1873-S (ha ha). Another reason I don't include the Gobrechts is that I would have to rent out the kids and work a night job. It's been enough of a task just doing the 1840-1873 set.

From **Dennis Hengeveld** (In The Netherlands): To definitely define the Liberty Seated series there are several aspects which should be taken into consideration. First of all, there are the mentioned Gobrecht Dollars. Normally, I would consider these to be part of the Liberty Seated series as these were the first use of the design, although with a different reverse. The series are named after the Liberty Seated design, so which reverse design the coin features is, at least to me not really of too much importance. The same can be said for the 20 Cent series. That denomination features essentially the same design on the obverse, with again a different reverse design. However, the Trade dollars are in my opinion a different point of discussion. Although the design does indeed feature a Liberty Seated figure, it's a completely different design only loosely based on the original design by Gobrecht, which named the other series. That way, I do consider the Gobrecht Dollars and 20 cent pieces part of the regular Liberty Seated series, but I do not consider Trade Dollars to be placed in the same category.

This Month's (September) Question

Which of the original 5 Seated series is the least difficult to complete in MS-60 or better?

(Note: this is a repeat question from October 2006 when it received no replies - we'll try again!)



Updates at www.seateddimevarieties.com Website by Gerry Fortin

As another month's end approaches, a gentle email from Bill Bugert appeared in my Inbox seeking an *E-Gobrecht* submission. His timing is good as I have a few hours of free time in the Shenzhen airport to reflect and type some commentary on a Blackberry.

For those of you not keenly familiar with China's geography, Shenzhen is located immediately north of Hong Kong. Shenzhen is a new city, being built over 25 years on the site of a small peasant fishing community. The story goes that Dong Xiaoping desired to build a grand new city to balance the influence of British controlled Hong Kong. Specifically, Shenzhen was created to be an experimental ground of capitalism in "socialism with Chinese characteristics." He drew a circle on the map of China and Shenzhen was born. Within 15 years, Shenzhen quickly became one of the top electronic manufacturing centers of China (2006 GDP of US \$75 billion) and the world. Only in China could such ambitious projects occur; the building of Shenzhen from a fishing village, the construction of Three Gorge Dam, and the development of Shanghai's trademark Pudong skyline across from the historic Bund district.

Back to seated coinage and recent updates to the www.seateddimevarieties.com website...

The biggest news of the past few months is the addition of a seated half dollar module to the open registry. Bill Bugert was kind enough to prepare three half dollar collecting objectives:

1. Liberty Seated Half Dollar Basic Set, Business Strike with 112 required coins
2. Liberty Seated Half Dollar - Top 100 Die Varieties
3. Liberty Seated Half Dollar With Varieties, The Ultimate Varieties Set with a staggering 318 required coins.

Each set follows the seated dime format for rarity assessment whereby an R-X rarity is assigned

for availability in EF/AU grades. The rarity assessment is converted to a numeric value for calculating weighted set grade and set rating.

The response from several Seated half dollar specialist is encouraging and the bottleneck for publishing their sets is my available time on weekends.

The next seated open registry module will be the quarters. Greg Johnson prepared a first draft listing of business strike and variety sets. Once the open registry is current for half dollars, then my attention will shift accordingly.

Lastly, I've started to add image posting capability to the open registry. You can find a few linked images inside my seated dime sets. This option has a lower priority versus the setup of half dollar and quarter set modules.

Message Board Update

Membership and posting rates continue to grow at the website's message board. Ninety-four members have registered and the average daily posting rate reached a peak of 22 in August before settling back a bit. I would consider 15 or so individuals to be the most active across all seated denominations. Could we reach the magic number of 100 members by year end? I believe so.

We've experimented with the Seated dime forum much to the delight of members. A polling option was added along with a topic view counter. Both changes improved the depth of topic discussions and provides insight into topic readership by non posting members or surfers. Jason Feldman is credited with the forum improvements and I sincerely hope he can find time to update the other forums accordingly.

As Always, Happy Hunting!
Sent by Blackberry from PCCW mobile



LSCC Officer Election Results for 2007-2008

Per John McCloskey, the following individuals were elected to positions as officers in the Liberty Seated Collectors Club for a one-year term effective September 1, 2007. Congratulations to the following:

President
John McCloskey



Vice President
Bill Bugert



Secretary/Treasurer
Len Augsburg



Many thanks to Larry Briggs who faithfully served as the Club's Vice President for nineteen years!

(Auction News continued from page 2)

arm and still realized \$34,500. An 1852 original dollar in AU-58, which was nicely retuned from an old cleaning, sold for \$37,000. An AU-58 1855 with hazy toning over an old cleaning hammered for \$4,600.

The Heritage Platinum Sale featured an 1840-O with drapery half dime in MS-63 which did not sell and had not sold in the February, 2007 Heritage sale nor the Heritage 2006 Atlanta sale.

An 1846 dime in AU-58 with light mottled toning over an old dipping did not sell. An 1873-CC dime in XF-40 with handsome dark toning soared to \$25,300. An 1874-CC dime in G-6 with a number of marks by the upraised arm sold for \$13,800 and an XF-40 example of the same date with porous surfaces and scratches still managed \$17,250.

An 1873-CC no arrows half dollar in MS-61 had some spots and dark areas, which held the price realized to \$10,925. An 1873-CC arrows in MS-64, and an absolutely beautiful coin, did not sell.

An 1872cc dollar in AU-58 with blue and gray toning realized for \$16,100.

In the companion catalogue, an 1846 half dime in AU-53, which sharply struck and nicely toned went for \$6,037. Two 1854-O huge O quarters in F-15 sold for \$2,760 and \$3,450 respectively. An 1866-S quarter in XF-40, which had been dipped but was still decent, sold for \$2,415 whereas a deeply, originally toned 1868-S in AU-55 realized \$1,955. Two nice 1871-S quarters were featured. The first in AU-55 with a bright scrape below stars 5 and 6 sold for \$3,220 and an AU-58 of the same date with nice gray toning sold for \$5,460. An 1872-S quarter, which was generously graded as VF-25, hammered for \$4,312.

An 1842-O small date half dollar in AU-50 with a decent strike, but a bit bright from a dipping, sold for \$5,075 and an 1874-CC in AU-55 with nice original toning did not sell, perhaps because of the weakness on the right hand stars.

An 1872-CC dollar in XF-45, which was well toned but a little soft on the BE of Liberty, sold for \$8,050.



The Samuel Moore Letters: Part I-The Hiring of Christian Gobrecht

by Len Augsburger

During a recent research trip to the American Philosophical Society in Philadelphia, my research partner, Joel Orosz, had the excellent idea to call for the Robert M. Patterson personal papers. Three letters from Samuel Moore to Robert M. Patterson dated June, 1835 were located. At this time Moore was the outgoing director of the mint; Patterson assumed the Mint directorship in July, 1835. Patterson's father had also been the Mint director, serving from 1806 to 1824. Tying the family knot even further, the incoming director Robert M. Patterson was the brother-in-law of the outgoing director Moore.

The first letter is dated June 16, 1835 and deals with the issue of hiring Christian Gobrecht as an engraver. Moore wrote to the Secretary of the Treasurer, Levi Woodbury, on the same day regarding the same issue. The Moore/Woodbury letter is largely reprinted in Breen's *Secret History of the Gobrecht Coinages*. Between the two letters, it is clear that the outgoing director Samuel Moore dearly wanted to get Gobrecht hired into the Mint, which indeed occurred later in 1835. The first Moore/Patterson letter reads as follows (the second and third letters will follow in a subsequent edition of the *E-Gobrecht*).

Mint of the United States
Philadelphia, June 16, 1835

Dear Sir:

The necessity of having an additional Engraver in the Mint which has for many years been sufficiently manifest may be considered as imperative now, in order to supply the Branch Mints with the requisite dies [Randy Wiley and Michael Fey, in separate articles in GJ #99, noted the situation of the New Orleans mint desiring additional dies]. Since the adoption of the Branch system I have had several conversations with Mr. Gobrecht to ascertain whether there is any hope of associating him with the institution – a mission I have long desired to accomplish. He is at

present employed as an engraver of Bank Notes [multiple bank note proofs reside in the Christian Gobrecht personal papers at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania], but could, I perceive, be detached from that pursuit, if a timely assurance could be given him, of continued[?] permanent employment in the Mint, so that he could give due notice to the company now having claims on him. If he could receive the necessary assurance by the 10th or 15th July, it would enable him to devote his full attention to the Mint from the first January next [1836].

No provision was made in the acts of last session [of Congress] for a second Engraver here but all the Branches are left dependant on this source for dies [note Moore's reference to a "second", not "assistant" Engraver]. That another Engraver therefore must be assigned to the institution by act of Congress or in [unclear] of that engaged by print contract, is a matter of simple absolute majority and I therefore regard it as a thing virtually done in one of those ways. There is no diversity of opinion here, I think, certainly now at the Mint, as to the peculiar fitness of Gobrecht for the plans.

In a communication to the Department this day [Moore is probably referring to his letter to Treasury Secretary Woodbury written the same day] I have suggested the strong expediency of adopting timely measures, in order that the commencement of coinage at the Branches may not be delayed for want of dies, and relying on my recollection of your opinion heretofore expressed in regard to Mr. G[obrecht], I took the liberty of referring to you presuming that you will certainly stop through Washington, and have an interview with the President [Jackson] and Secretary of Treasury [Woodbury]. Mr. Gobrecht could not I believe be secured on a less expectation than \$1500, nor is it equitable that he should. In mentioning this in my letter to Mr. Woodbury I have taken occasion to impart again the views I entertain in regard to the inconsistency of the present Mint salaries.

Continued on page 7.



Continued from page 6.

Mr. Peale will be here in a few days [Peale had been dispatched in 1833 on a two year tour of Europe to study minting technology at the English, French and German mints]. Certainly, I think, by the [unclear, Moore seems to indicate a European departure of May 16th, expecting Peale's return by the end of June]. He will have some good suggestions to offer, no doubt, on the subject of [unclear] dies, and Gobrecht has long had a desire to evince his powers in an effort of this character. I hope the spark[?] of the commencement of coinage under the Branch system may be [unclear] by something really beautiful.

On your arrival here you will be able to give an answer to Gobrecht, if it shall have been satisfactory to the President to authorize the requisite assurance in the case, and this will be in time for him to give the warning demanded by his current employment.

I am in great regard,
Yours very truly
Samuel Moore

P.S. Afternoon – Mr. Peale has arrived.



The Unique 1866 No-Motto Half Dollar



LSCC Treasurer's Final Report for 2006-2007 by Len Augsburg

Starting balance	\$10,852.94
Ending balance	\$11,280.85
<u>Income</u>	<u>\$10,636.20</u>
* Dues	\$ 8,844.14
* Back issues	\$ 1,015.00
* Interest	\$ 642.06
* Ads	\$ 120.00
* Donations	\$ 5.00

<u>Expenses</u>	<u>\$10,208.29</u>
* Printing	\$ 6,697.56
* Postage	\$ 3,027.57
* Office supplies	\$ 253.39
* Website	\$ 92.77
* PO box	\$ 68.00
* ANA dues	\$ 36.00
* Bank fees	\$ 33.00

We have 612 members and a total of 56 member-years paid in advance.



(Continued from page 1)

additional page count editions for *Gobrecht Journal* #101 and *Gobrecht Journal* #102 as well.

* The formatting work for Collective Volume #5 is complete. Our editor will do a final check on the layout. A printed copy of the current version was presented. Binding options are still unclear, but we will likely use a print-on-demand service.

* The New Orleans greatest coins survey will be printed in the March 2008 issue of the *Gobrecht Journal*. The number one coin is the 1853-O NA 50c. Competition for the remainder is tight. A Philadelphia survey will follow.

* The seated dollar survey, using Duncan Lee's variety list, will be mailed in January, 2008.

* Attendance at the meeting was 38, including many of the usual suspects.

Photos from the 2007 LSCC Annual Meeting



In the 1992 reference *The Complete Guide to Liberty Seated Half Dollars*, Randy Wiley and Bill Bugert listed edge reed counts for Liberty Seated Half Dollars. Since that time, additional reed counts have been discovered and the table below is an updated summary of those counts by date for the New Orleans Mint. Others reed counts may be found in the future. The other mints will be itemized in future issues of the *E-Gobrecht*. Address any questions or comments to Bill Bugert @ wb8cpy@arri.net

[illegible]



Subscriber Correspondence

From **Fred Bowman**: [I am] Curious to talk/correspond with someone who could advise me on the value and investment potential of some of the Liberty Seated Half Dollars that were recovered from the SS Republic shipwreck and are being sold by Odyssey Marine Exploration. Thanks, Fred Bowman FritzKat@aol.com

From **Joe Brusco**: Hi Bill, I'd like to sign up for the above newsletter. My primary interest is in proof seated 10, 25 (especially), and 50 cent pieces with "original" looking toning. Thanks!

From **Dennis Hengeveld**: I continued writing on my article since I wrote you about a couple of weeks back and I have to admit that it got a little but out of hand (although at least in a positive way). My last count of the # of words came at roughly 9,100 words, and I'm expecting to roughly at another 1,200 to finish the article like I had it in mind when I started writing it. I know that this is a considerably larger number than the 3,500 words I anticipated when I wrote you last time. Please let me know if there are still possibilities to publish this article in the E-Gobrecht. I expect to have the article finished this weekend, with spelling check and some additions probably taking a day or 2, after when I can send you the article. About the possibilities of me getting a member of the LSCC, if you could please check out what the possibilities are I would be very glad if you do this. Of course, I realize that there are extra costs for shipping the magazine, but it's probably the payment possibilities which might be a problem.

Upcoming Articles in the *Gobrecht Journal*

Here is a sampling of the research being conducted by members of the LSCC. Look for these titles in future issues of the *Gobrecht Journal*.

- Biography of Kamal M. Ahwash
- Biography of Martin Luther Beistle
- Information on Daniel W. Valentine
- Quarter dollar survey results
- "Sitting Liberty": The Christian Gobrecht Catalogue Raisonné
- 1866-P Half Dollars "With Motto" from Two Master Tail Dies
- 1873 Open 3 - Closed 3 Logotypes
- Trade Dollar major varieties

Advertisements

Rare Coins for Sale: Since 1979, **David Lawrence Rare Coins** has specialized in Seated and Barber coinage for collectors. Please visit our web site for 6,000+ offerings of U.S. & World coins, currency, and stamps for sale and auction. We are also interested in buying or selling your coins at auction. <http://www.davidlawrence.com> or phone 1-800-776-0560, members: PNG, ANA (life), FUN, CSNS

Cuds & Rotated Dies Wanted: Looking to purchase major die breaks / retained cuds / full cuds / shattered die states on Liberty Seated Quarters. Also, major rotated dies of greater than 75 degrees CW or CCW. Preference is for breaks/cuds in the field areas only, no rim cuds please. Other U.S. series of interest as well. Please reply directly to Paul Kluth @ pcmdmp@msn.com or to the e-mail address of the *E-Gobrecht* newsletter. Thanks!



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LSCC Pledge

To encourage, promote, and dispense numismatic knowledge of the Liberty Seated coins; to cultivate fraternal relations among its members and all those interested in the science of numismatics.

LSCC Membership Information. Dues are \$20 per year and include three issues of the *Gobrecht Journal*, an award winning numismatic publication. To join the Liberty Seated Collectors Club, for *Gobrecht Journal* mailing address changes, or for other membership questions, correspond with the LSCC Secretary.

Articles, comments, or advertisements for publication in the *Gobrecht Journal* may be addressed to the LSCC President.

Information, input, comments, or suggestions for improvements to this *E-Gobrecht* are actively solicited from anyone and may be sent to the Editor, *E-Gobrecht*.

To be added or removed from the *E-Gobrecht* mailing list, send an email message with the words "Subscribe/Unsubscribe" in the subject line of the message to: wb8cpy@arrl.net.

Wanted: Material for this newsletter!

Please consider submitting something for print. It need not be elaborate; it can be something as simple as a short note on your favorite variety, neat find, nice cherry pick, happenings at a coin show, rare Liberty Seated coinage coming up for auction, etc. If you are interested in it, rest assured, others will be too! Sharing information is a goal of this newsletter. This is a continuing plea.

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Mark your

- Dues notice and ballot for The *Gobrecht Journal* Award – September 2007.
- 100th Issue of the *Gobrecht Journal* – November 2007.
- LSCC Seated Dollar census – 2008.
- LSCC Trade Dollar census – 2009.

Availability of past issues. Through the generosity of Gerry Fortin, the previous issues of the *E-Gobrecht* are readily accessible on his seated dime website at <http://www.seateddimevarieties.com/LSCC.htm>